

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of the claims is intended to replace all previous versions and/or listings of the claims in the present application:

Claims 1-75 (Cancelled)

Claim 76 (Original) A method for stimulating a vein of a subject, comprising:

placing, around an external surface of the vein, a wire shaped so as to define an arc of between about 270 and about 359 degrees; and

driving an electrical current through the wire, so as to stimulate the vein.

Claim 77 (Original) The method according to claim 76, wherein the vein includes a hepatic portal vein, and wherein placing the wire comprises placing the wire around the external surface of the portal vein.

Claim 78 (Original) The method according to claim 76, wherein the electrode includes a removable curved needle, and wherein placing the wire comprises:

using the needle to draw the electrode around the external surface of the vein beneath at least a portion of connective tissue surrounding the vein; and

removing the needle after completion of the drawing.

Claim 79 (Original) A method for sensing electrical activity of a vein of a subject, comprising:

placing, around an external surface of the vein, a wire shaped so as to define an arc of between about 270 and about 359 degrees; and

sensing the electrical activity of the vein, using the wire.

Claim 80 (Original) The method according to claim 79, wherein the vein includes a hepatic portal vein, and wherein placing the wire comprises placing the wire around the external surface of the portal vein.

Claim 81 (Original) The method according to claim 79, wherein the electrode includes a removable curved needle, and wherein placing the wire comprises:

using the needle to draw the electrode around the external surface of the vein beneath at least a portion of connective tissue surrounding the vein; and

removing the needle after completion of the drawing.

Claims 82-163 (Cancelled)

Claim 164 (Original) Apparatus comprising an electrode, which comprises a wire shaped so as to define an arc of between about 270 and about 359 degrees, the electrode adapted to be applied around an external surface of a vein.

Claim 165 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 164, wherein the vein includes a hepatic portal vein, and wherein the electrode is adapted to be applied around the external surface of the portal vein.

Claim 166 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 164, wherein the electrode comprises an electrically insulating coating that coats a portion of a circumference of the wire that does not come in contact with the external surface of the vein.

Claim 167 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 164, wherein the electrode comprises a removable curved needle, adapted to:

draw the electrode around the surface of the vein beneath at least a portion of connective tissue surrounding the vein, and

be removed after completion of the drawing.

Claim 168 (Original) Apparatus comprising:

a support structure; and

two or more electrodes coupled to the support structure, each of the electrodes comprising a wire shaped so as to define an arc of between about 270 and about 359 degrees, the electrodes adapted to be applied around an external surface of a vein.

Claim 169 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 168, wherein the vein includes a hepatic portal vein, and wherein the electrodes are adapted to be applied around the external surface of the portal vein.

Claim 170 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 168, wherein each of the electrodes comprises an electrically insulating coating that coats a portion of a circumference of the wire that does not come in contact with the external surface of the vein.

Claim 171 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 168, wherein each of the electrodes comprises a removable curved needle, adapted to:

draw the electrode around the surface of the vein beneath at least a portion of connective tissue surrounding the vein, and

be removed after completion of the drawing.

Claim 172 (Original) The apparatus according to any one of claims 168-171, wherein the support structure comprises an elongated rod.

Claim 173 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 172, wherein the rod has a length of between about 2 and about 3 cm.

Claim 174 (Original) The apparatus according to claim 172, wherein the rod has a length of between about 1 and about 3 mm.

Claims 175-177 (Cancelled)